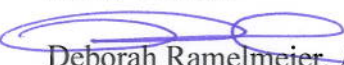


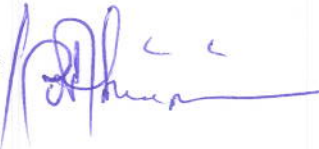
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
311 WEST SARATOGA STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201**

DATE: August 15, 2014

POLICY #: SSA - CW # 15-4

TO: Directors, Local Departments of Social Services
Assistant Directors, Services
Chiefs of Foster Care and Adoption
Fiscal Officers

FROM:  Deborah Ramelmeier, Acting Executive Director
Social Services Administration

Margaret Hughes, Deputy Director
Budget Management and Finance 

RE: SFY 2015 Allocation for Adoption Promotion and Support Services

PROGRAMS AFFECTED: Adoption and Foster Care

ORIGINATING OFFICE: Office of Child Welfare Practice and Policy
Social Services Administration

ACTION REQUIRED OF: Adoption Programs, Foster Care Programs, and Finance Officers

REQUIRED ACTION: Utilize, Monitor, and Report Quarterly on the use of Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program Funds for Adoption Promotion and Support Services.

ACTION DUE DATE: Immediately

CONTACT PERSON: Helene Hornum, Program Analyst
410-767-7247
helene.hornum@maryland.gov

PURPOSE:

This policy directive sets forth usage and reporting requirements for Adoption Promotion and Support Services funded through the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program.

Please refer to information distributed by DHR's Budget office for your Adoption Promotion and Support Services allocation.

If one-half (1/2) of the local department's allocation is not spent by January 1, 2015, any remaining amount will be subject to reallocation to other local departments that are spending their Adoption Promotion funds. In addition, a local department that fails to submit their quarterly reports will risk reduction and reallocation of their Adoption Promotion funds to another local department.

The Adoption Promotion and Support Services funds continue to be linked to the forthcoming adoption goals and are **specifically geared to ensure that the children with a goal of adoption get adopted. These funds can be spent on anything that would remove barriers to a finalized adoption or that would expedite the adoption process. When preparing the required action plans, the local departments should think about any one-time expenses that they may have during SFY 2015 that would help a child get adopted. Purchasing a wheelchair-accessible van for an adoptive family in order to transport a special-needs child or purchasing an electronic item such as an iPad, is an example of a one-time expense. These one-time expenses need approval first from SSA then from the Federal government prior to the purchase being made.**

Adoption Promotion money should no longer be used to provide post-adoption services. With the passage of HB 683 on April 6, 2009, funding will continue for the Post-Adoption Support Services Program (see policy directive SSA #12-34 for more information).

ACTION PLAN:

Local departments must submit a fully detailed "action plan" for SFY 2015 by **September 21, 2014**. The plan must provide the local department of social services' contact name and phone number for monitoring purposes. **Failure to submit a plan by the established deadline will result in the total allocation for that local being withheld and redirected by the Social Services Administration to another jurisdiction.** The action plan must provide an adequate description of the planned expenditures based on the total allocation and the approximate number of families and children to be served. **In addition, the plan must tie-in with the adoption goals and justify how each proposed activity and/or service would help in getting a child adopted. Again, please think about any one-time expenses that you may have during the SFY 2015.** If the local plan cannot realistically utilize the total allocation, the plan should clearly state the funding needs of the jurisdiction and identify any remaining amount that can be returned to the Social Services Administration.

For SFY 2015, a spending cap is being imposed on certain activities. No more than 20% of the total adoption promotion allocation can be spent on adoption celebrations. In addition, no more

than 20% of the total allocation can be spent on training and conferences. Please specify in your action plan how the training and adoption celebrations help achieve your adoption goal.

Case Record Document

To ensure that funding is properly expended at the local level, each local department will be required to document in the child's case record steps taken to promptly implement permanency plans for children in out-of-home care. For children with a permanency plan of adoption or placement in another permanent family home, the local department must document what has been done to find an adoptive family or other permanent living arrangement for the child. The implementation of the permanency plan may include placement of a child with an adoptive family, a relative, or a legal guardian. The plan may also specify another planned permanent living arrangement and may indicate actions taken to finalize the adoption or legal guardianship. Documentation shall include clearly defined, child-specific recruitment efforts to locate a family for a hard-to-place child and a summary of services to a finalized adoptive family that supported and/or sustained an adoptive child in the family. This documentation must be available for Quality Assurance Site Reviews.

Requirements

Promoting Safe and Stable Families funds CANNOT be combined with other grants or merged into other flex fund accounts. A SEPARATE ACCOUNTING MUST BE MAINTAINED. The Department is required to report to the United States Department of Health and Human Services the amount of funds spent on EACH service of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program.

The number of families and children served must be submitted quarterly on the attached Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program Adoption Promotion and Support Services' Quarterly Program Report form (page 6 of 7). The expenditures reported on the quarterly reports must be reconciled to the Monthly 302 Report to ensure that reported data is consistent.

On the attached Summary of Services form (page 7 of 7), each Quarterly Report must include a brief description of each activity charged to Adoption Promotion and Support Services, **and how these activities are helping to achieve the SFY 2015 adoption goals.** If the activity is a support or recruitment activity, the date(s) and attendance records must be included with the report. This program report must be submitted to Helene Hornum, Program Analyst, Office of Child Welfare Practice and Policy, Social Services Administration. **As already stated, a local department that fails to submit these quarterly reports will risk their remaining allocation being reduced and reallocated to another local department.**

The report submission dates and periods covered are as follow:

Submission Dates

October 17, 2014
January 16, 2015
April 17, 2015
April 17, 2015

Periods Covered

July 1, 2014 – September 30, 2014
October 1, 2014 - December 31, 2014
January 1, 2015 – March 31, 2015
April 1, 2015– June 30, 2015

The allocation for SFY 2015 and all expenditures for services rendered between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015 must be liquidated (services provided and paid for) by June 30, 2015. The FMIS report and quarterly expenditure reporting will be used to monitor expenditures.

SSA will be closely monitoring the expenditures of each local department at the end of each quarter. As previously stated, if one-half (1/2) of the local department's allocation is not spent by January 1, 2015, the remaining funds may be reallocated to another local department that is spending their Adoption Promotion funds.

All contracts and purchase orders must follow COMAR Title 21 procurement regulations.

In order to track and report the use of these funds, please use the following charge codes:

- All child and family-specific expenses should be requested through the Chessie Service Log choosing Category Code **4140** for PSSF Adoption Promotion.
- Any charges that are not child and family-specific should use charge code PCA GC940, Project/Subproject number 0302.86, within the Child Welfare Services (n00g0003) program and the appropriate agency object for the purchase made.

**PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM
ADOPTION PROMOTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES
QUARTERLY PROGRAM REPORT for SFY 2015**

Local Department: _____
 Person Completing Form: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Report Period:
 July 1, 2014 – September 30, 2014 _____ October 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 _____ January 1, 2015 – March 31, 2015 _____
 April 1, 2015 – June 30, 2015 _____

Account Name	Account Number/ Project/Subproject/ Object	Expenditures Current Quarter	Expenditures Y-T-D	Obligated Funds to Date	Families Served Current Quarter	Children Served Current Quarter	Families Served Y-T-D	Children Served Y-T-D
Adoption Promotion and Support Services	GC940 0302.86 (non child and family-specific)							
	4140 (child and family-specific)							

Allocation		Mail or Fax the Report to:
Year-to-Date Expenditures	_____	Helene Hornum
Remaining Balance	_____	Social Services Administration
		311 W. Saratoga Street, 5 th Floor
		Baltimore, MD 21201
		Fax #: 410-333-6556

**PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM
ADOPTION PROMOTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES
QUARTERLY PROGRAM REPORT for SFY 2015**

Local Department: _____
 Person Completing Form: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Report Period: _____
 July 1, 2014 – September 30, 2014 _____ October 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 _____ January 1, 2015 – March 31, 2015 _____
 April 1, 2015 – June 30, 2015 _____

Account Name	Account Number/ Project/Subproject/ Object	Expenditures Current Quarter	Expenditures Y-T-D	Obligated Funds to Date	Families Served Current Quarter	Children Served Current Quarter	Families Served Y-T-D	Children Served Y-T-D
Adoption Promotion and Support Services	GC940 0302.86 (non child and family-specific)							
	4140 (child and family-specific)							

Allocation	_____	Mail or Fax the Report to: Helene Hornum Social Services Administration 311 W. Saratoga Street, 5 th Floor Baltimore, MD 21201 Fax #: 410-333-6556
Year-to-Date Expenditures	_____	
Remaining Balance	_____	